



# Surveillance Impact Report

Social Media Monitoring Technology  
Department of Elections

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As required by San Francisco Administrative Code, Section 19B, departments must submit a Surveillance Impact Report for each surveillance technology to the Committee on Information Technology ("COIT") and the Board of Supervisors.

The Surveillance Impact Report details the benefits, costs, and potential impacts associated with the Department's use of a Social Media Monitoring Technology.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE TECHNOLOGY

The Department's mission is:

The San Francisco Department of Elections is dedicated to providing equitable access to voting and election-related services and to conducting free, fair, and functional elections for the City and County of San Francisco.

In line with its mission, the Department intends to use a Social Media Monitoring Technology to plan, coordinate and schedule its social media postings, which inform the public about general election topics such as voter registration, voting options, language services, and accessible voting services and tools; election-specific topics such as upcoming deadlines, contests on the ballot, and opportunities for civic engagement; and, the Department's efforts to engage with City residents via its voter outreach program and community partnerships. For example, the Department's Outreach Division conducted 547 events across the City in 2022.

The Department shall use Social Media Monitoring Technology only for the following authorized purposes:

- Plan and execute more effective and strategic campaigns across social media platforms.
- Schedule multiple social media posts in advance.
- Create and monitor multiple streams of content across various platforms.
- Maintain active social media presence that is automated, specifically on weekends when staff is off.
- Ensure consistency of messaging across all social media platforms.
- Track post performance and analyze trends to improve content and strategy.
- Create reports.

Any use(s) not identified in the Authorized Use(s) above are strictly prohibited. The Department will **not**

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## Surveillance Oversight Review Dates

PSAB Review: Rec. On 3/24/2023

COIT Review: 4/20/2023

Board of Supervisors Review: TBD

use Social Media Monitoring Technology scrape or save social media data for purposes beyond measuring engagement, performance, and metrics. The Department will **not** use Social Media Monitoring Technology to monitor political speech, listen to discussions, or collect data on elections.

Department technology is located in the cloud. Social Media Monitoring Technology is cloud-based software, which Elections staff will access and use from CCSF computers and devices.

## **Technology Details**

The following is a product description of Social Media Monitoring Technology:

Social Media Monitoring Technology provides social web marketing services by offering social media dashboards that allow updates to social networks through web, desktop, and mobile platforms and track campaign results and industry trends.

Social Media Monitoring Technology helps people connect on social media and connect with the communities they leave in, the teams they work with, the brands they love, the customers who believe in them, and the leaders and visionaries who show them the way forward. Social Media Monitoring Technology is useful for managing small teams and/or making a bold leap forward to completely transform social media enterprises through the power of human connection.

Social Media Monitoring Technology assists organizations in building enduring customer relationships at scale. Social media is the center of individual and community online presence. It is where they discover products, consume media, and connect with like-minded people. Social Media Monitoring Technology provides a powerful platform to build strong internal cultures, uncover emotionally rich consumer insights, and unify the customer experience across channels and departments.

### **A. How It Works**

To function, Social Media Monitoring Technology is a social network manager that allows users to create custom views of all connected social networks. This technology can be used to post content across multiple social media accounts, manage social media messaging, implement and track targeted social media campaigns, and coordinate the organization's social media marketing efforts. The platform aggregates social media feeds so that content and trends can be viewed holistically.

All data collected or processed by Social Media Monitoring Technology will be handled or stored by an outside provider or third-party vendor on an ongoing basis. Specifically, data will be handled or stored by the platform to ensure the Department may continue to use the technology

## IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The impact assessment addresses the conditions for surveillance technology approval, as outlined by the Standards of Approval in San Francisco Administrative Code, Section 19B:

1. The benefits of the surveillance technology outweigh the costs.
2. The Department's Policy safeguards civil liberties and civil rights.
3. The uses and deployments of the surveillance technology are not based upon discriminatory or viewpoint-based factors and do not have a disparate impact on any community or Protected Class.

The Department's use of the surveillance technology is intended to support and benefit the residents of San Francisco while minimizing and mitigating all costs and potential civil rights and liberties impacts of residents.

### A. Benefits

The Department's use of Social Media Monitoring Technology has the following benefits for the residents of the City and County of San Francisco:

- **Information:** Social Media Monitoring Technology enables the Department to broadcast information about general election topics such as voter registration, voting options (by mail and in-person), language services and translated materials, accessible voting services and tools, and ranked choice voting in local contests. In the months and weeks leading up to each election, this technology will also assist the Department in publicizing information about election-specific topics such as upcoming deadlines, contests on the ballot, and opportunities for civic engagement such as elections process observation. This technology will also enable the Department to further engage with City residents who choose to use social media as a source of information by using this technology to publish print and digital publications, instructional videos, web tools, and details about the Department's in-person, telephone, and email customer service. The centralized platform of a Social Media Monitoring Technology will connect all of the Department's social media accounts, enabling Department staff to more quickly, efficiently, and effectively provide information, respond to questions, and engage with City residents.
- **Education:** San Francisco voters and all members of the public benefit indirectly from the Department of Elections' use of Social Media Monitoring Technology, as its use bolsters election-operations literacy. Information disseminated on social media by the official accounts of the Department can help improve the public's understanding of how elections are administered, and dispel incorrect or misleading information about elections processes.
- **Community Outreach:** Social Media Monitoring Technology will enable the Department to optimize its Community Outreach efforts by promoting and strengthening collaboration with local community-based organizations and City agencies, facilitating equitable participation in electoral processes, and optimizing strategies to reach the City's most vulnerable voters and potential registrants. Residents will benefit from the use of this technology because it will allow the Department to focus and target its outreach efforts to residents who would otherwise be less likely to engage with the democratic process, thus furthering the Department's equitable goals.

This technology will further improve the Department's ability to promote community outreach events and solicit feedback from City residents and communities on the accessibility of Department programs, services, resources, and tools.

- **Employment and Volunteer Opportunities:** Every election, the Department hires hundreds of temporary employees to help assist its year-round workforce and recruits thousands of volunteer poll workers who serve at one of the City's polling places on Election Day. The Department will promote these employment and volunteer opportunities via Social Media Monitoring Technology in an effort to build an equitable and inclusive workplace in which all employees and volunteers can thrive and succeed.

## B. Civil Rights Impacts and Safeguards

The Department has considered the potential impacts and has identified the technical, administrative, and physical protections as mitigating measures:

Though the potential for impact is very low, the Department will limit access to staff in its outreach and voter information divisions.

Prior to granting account credentials the Deputy Director and management team will counsel staff on appropriate and inappropriate use as well as provide access to departmental social media guidelines. Periodic reminders will be sent via email.

The San Francisco Department of Elections strives to mitigate all potential civil rights impacts through responsible technology and data use policies and procedures, and intends to use social media monitoring software exclusively for aforementioned authorized use cases. All other uses are prohibited.

Through Social Media Monitoring Technology, the Department only has access to posts that have been published by social media users. Public posts include timelines, posts, and other content from public accounts. By contrast, the Department does not have access to private direct messaging, or messages between private accounts that do not belong to the Department, or payments. The Department will not utilize geographic tags added by users to postings or commenter demographics to track or intercept residents, nor will the Department access such posts with the intention to maliciously surveil, track or monitor its residents.

## C. Fiscal Analysis of Costs and Benefits

The Department's use of Social Media Monitoring Technology yields the following business and operations benefits:

- **Financial savings:** Staff time to manually input social media posts into individual social media posts on days that fall outside the standard 40-hour work week (weekends) would likely require approximately 8 hours of overtime per week (32 hours per month).
- **Time savings:** Staff time to manually input social media posts into individual social media platforms represents a savings of 15 hours a week (between at least 3 staff) or 60 hours per month.
- **Improved Data Quality:** Currently, the Department must mine social media data on

engagement via each individual platform, which is laborious and inefficient. Social Media Monitoring Technology will allow data to be mined and analyzed in a much more efficient and effective manner (often in real-time).

The fiscal cost, such as initial purchase, personnel and other ongoing costs, include:

- Number of FTE (new & existing): The technology **does not require** additional FTE; however, it will be supported by a cohort of staff members representing the following classifications.
  - 1x - 0952 - Deputy Director II
  - 2x – 1842 – Voter Support/Outreach Manager
  - 2x – 1840 – Voter Support/Outreach Lead
  - 2x – 1403 – Voter Support/Outreach Coordinator
  
- The annual costs are:
  - Total Salary & Fringe: \$120,000
  - Software: \$9,000/year
  - Hardware/ Equipment: 0
  - Professional Services: 0
  - Training: Included in annual licensing fee.

#### **COMPARISON TO OTHER JURISDICTIONS**

Social Media Monitoring Technology is currently utilized by other governmental entities for similar purposes.